



**KCMO HEALTH DEPARTMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM**

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Public Health

CLOSING YOUR POOL FOR THE SEASON

Kansas City winters can be hard on outdoor swimming pools, especially if you do not follow the proper steps to winterize them. Properly winterizing a pool will make reopening in the spring much easier. Here are 10 general steps you can follow to winterize your pool.

1. **When to close.** In many areas of the country, Labor Day marks the end of pool season and the closing of outdoor pools. This may not be the ideal time to winterize because the pool water is still warm and the chlorine demand still high. Mid-October, when the water temperature is 70°, may be a more ideal time. Chlorine demand is lower and winterizing chemicals will last long enough to keep algae from blooming in the spring.
2. **Structure and equipment inspection.** Inspect the pool structure and all equipment for breaks or defects and replace or repair if damaged. This will help prevent further damage over the winter.
3. **Test the pool chemicals.** Test the pool chemicals at least 3 to 7 days prior winterizing and adjust them to the proper levels. This will help keep the pool surface from corroding and scale from building up.
4. **Add winterizing chemicals.** Dissolve granular winterizing chemicals in a bucket and add them directly to the pool water after they completely dissolve. Allow enough time for the chemicals to circulate and evenly disperse throughout the pool.
5. **Draining the water.** Many experts agree that the pool should be drained down 12 to 18 inches below the outlets. Water in the plumbing lines can then drain back to the pool. Inlet and outlet holes should be plugged to prevent water from getting in and freezing.
6. **Shutting down equipment.** At this point, pumps should be shut off and timers, if used, disabled. Pumps can easily be damaged if they run without proper water flow.
7. **Covering the pool.** It is very important to cover the pool and secure it according to the manufacturer's specifications. Edges should be sealed tight to prevent debris from being blown into the pool.
8. **Chemical storage.** Chemicals should be stored as they should be while the pool is open. Store them in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area away from other products. They should be kept sealed and in their original containers.
9. **Secure the enclosure.** Make sure gates are properly secured and the fencing is in good repair. This is important to help keep children out while there is minimal supervision during the off season.
10. **Off season care.** Check the pool to make sure rain or snow has not caused the pool water level to rise and put too much pressure on the cover. Use a pool cover pump to drain off excess water so that the cover does not stretch or sink. Remove any debris that accumulates on the cover. It may be a good idea to test the winterizing chemicals in both the late fall and early spring to see how well they are working.